

PRICK

FREE

FEBRUARY 2009
VOL. 9 ISSUE 5

Magazine



Featuring:

**The
A.K.A.s**

**Jess
Yen**

**The
Miami
Tattoo
Expo
and
more**

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PRICK

THE WORLD'S FIRST FREE TATTOO AND PIERCING LIFESTYLE PUBLICATION

FEBRUARY 2009

VOLUME 9 ISSUE 5

PUBLISHER'S NOTE:

Happy February and, of course, Happy Valentine's Day. I hope you like the new format of the magazine. So far the response has been great. Our 100th issue celebration at Halo Lounge was a great time and a huge thanks goes out to all who attended. Now that we have passed the 100th issue and made the transition to the new look we can continue to push the limits of our general operations and media footprint.

We have updated the Prickmag.net Web site and our MySpace pages and our free downloadable version of the magazine is getting viewed more than ever. We are also getting more requests for magazines. We are currently launching a new system online to accommodate and offer subscriptions and opportunities to be a larger scale distributor. Stay tuned for updates.

On a final note la-tee da-tee we like to party! So on March 17th we are taking over East Atlanta for our annual St. Pat-PRICK's Day bash. To make up for last year's party getting blown away by a tornado, the party will be at two bars The EARL and The Graveyard Tavern. Live bands and piercing performances at the EARL and a tattoo contest and tattoo related festivities at The Graveyard. See our ad on the next page for more details. Until then enjoy this issue, and I hope to see you at the SLC and Tampa tattoo conventions.

Peace,
— Chuck B.

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photographed by Sylvia Hagar



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The crew from **Trip Ink** in Las Vegas



Matching tattoo and sculpture by **Alexei OBrien** of **Flesh to Stone: Custom Sculptures Made From Your Tattoo**



Custom tattooing by **Aaron** from Tampa, Fla.



Having fun at the Expo



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L.A. BODY ART EXPO

BY GUSTAVO MONTOYA
PHOTOS BY CHRIS SCHARFFENBERG

PRICKIN' AROUND

Last September the Body Art Expo made another big splash in Los Angeles, Cali. Held at the Los Angeles Convention Center, tattoo artists came from far and wide to take part in the infamous hedonism. With contests like "Hottest Ass" and "Hot Stud," there was plenty of entertainment to go around. Along with the tattooing came the contests, live performances from bands, and sideshows. Notably there were some innovative booths to peruse as well, including the Metal Ink booth where they had real tattoos printed on clothing and the Flesh to Stone booth where tattoo art is made into sculptures. Just what will they come up with next? Check the Body Art Expo Web site to find out about future events. ★



Shawn O'Hare of **Fillmore Tattoo**



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MAX BRAND

BY STACY "NENA" RUSNAK
PHOTOS COURTESY OF MAX BRAND

PIERCER OF THE MONTH

Max Brand has come a long way from his Florida and Pennsylvania upbringing. His high school band days in CROME may have had something to do with Brand's creativity and attention to artistic aesthetics. Time spent rockin' out to Nirvana and Metallica has to lead somewhere, right? We want to know how Brand got from seeing hypodermic needles sticking out of someone's arm and saying, "Wow, that looks like fun!" to full-time talented piercer.

In 1996, Brand began piercing his classmates after school. Oddly enough, even his earliest piercings seemed nearly flawless. Landing his first job at InkWell Tattoo in Pennsylvania under Michelle Pristula, Brand refined his technique, focusing not only on the process; but, most importantly, on customer service (something we don't get a lot of these days!).

In 2004, Brand left InkWell and headed to Atlanta, Ga. He took a brief vacation from piercing, returning shortly after getting a half sleeve by Brandon Bond at All or Nothing Tattoo. As luck would have it, six months later Brand became their piercer. What's more, he also began photographing tattoo conventions for *PRICK*, combining both his knack for piercing and his love of photography.

Brand's talent emerges in his art of "play piercing". His interest in the art aspect means that his prep work is as important as his execution. The icing on the cake is the photograph he makes of the final product. Not only is Brand piercing his clients, he's also immortalizing them as documents of history. His method consists of transferring his design from paper onto skin (his "secret weapon"), and taking time to ensure the consistency of the placement—something he tells us he rarely sees in other work. It all takes one to two hours depending upon the part of the body being pierced. The needles are inserted under the skin for twenty to thirty minutes, long enough for the shoot, which includes photographing the

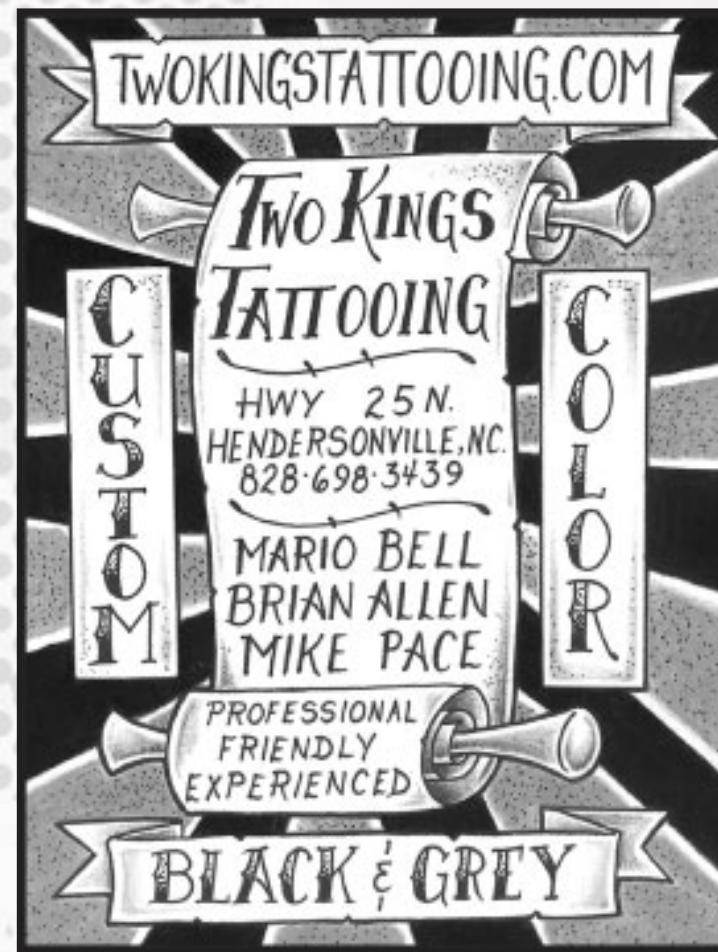


removal of the needles and the bit of blood when they are taken out.

One might worry about the seemingly self-centered nature of the process, the real impermanence of it all since there's no jewelry, like with regular piercing. However, Brand realizes the importance of documenting the moment for people to witness hundreds of years from now. It's art—only in a different format than what we're used to. Can't photos of body modifications hang on a museum's walls?

Why pay for all of this anyway? People do it because they enjoy pain, because they like being part of the artistic process, some people do it as a rite of passage. Others see it as bragging rights, "wow that's cool!" or "yuck that's gross!" Whatever the reason, it can be a therapeutic process both physically and mentally, much like acupuncture.

Lastly, we can't help but wonder why Brand always seems to pierce only the really hot chicks. Well, hairy fellows aren't really part of his art form. Where can you get more of Brand? You can always find him at: Allornothingtattoo.com or on MySpace at: Myspace.com/maxbrand. ★



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JESS YEN

MY TATTOO

ARTIST OF THE MONTH

BY LYNDSEY SARGENT PHOTOS COURTESY OF JESS YEN

Getting a tattoo from Jess Yen is a lengthy, insightful, and above all, personal process. There is no way to expedite what he does—which is more than ink on skin, it's art, tradition, and culture rolled into one. It is an experience and personal journey, no doubt why Yen has become one of the fore figures in the states of present day Tebori, traditional hand poked tattooing, in his Alhambra, Cali. shop My Tattoo. Born and raised in Taiwan, his background in Japanese and Chinese cultures helps inspire unique and creative designs to a list of clientele booked up to two years in advance. A student of karma, Yen believes "what goes around, comes around," and has dedicated his life to his art, the stories of his clients, and creating masterpieces out of the two.



When did you first start to develop an interest in art and tattooing?

I was born in Taiwan and raised in a strict Japanese traditional way by my grandfather. My father passed away due to a plane accident when I was only a month old; therefore, my mom and I have been through a lot of hardship during my childhood. I believe this has made me a strong person inside. I always love to do drawing and creating art in different media.

When I was thirteen, I did my first tattoo of a Kanji character on my classmate's arm by using a needle that was tied to a bamboo stick. Because of my great interest in art, my mom decided to send me to an art technical high school which is well-known for its art and design program in Taipei. After graduating from college, I worked for a Japanese interior designer in Taipei for a few years. I even worked on a couple of celebrity's houses in Taiwan. It was quite an experience for me.

How did you end up in SoCal and decide to settle down there?

I had decided to come to the United States for a master degree in fine arts.





Unfortunately, my mom (back in Taiwan) experienced a financial difficulty, so I was not able to complete the program. Later, I met my girlfriend, who is now my wife. She got my name tattooed on her lower back at a tattoo shop in Venice Beach, Cali. That was my first time seeing an electrical tattoo machine and I was amazed by its "speed." I decided to combine my hand-poked tattoo skill with an advantage of an electrical machine to make a living.

The beginning was never easy. I started my tattoo career at my garage until I was invited by a local tattoo shop owner, Ken, to work at his shop in Alhambra, Cali. Ken became a really good friend of mine. He sold his business to me, which I renamed My Tattoo.

You're often booked up to two years in advance. What do you think makes you such a stand out figure in the tattooing community when there are so many artists out there?

I am very grateful towards people who like my work. This mind of gratitude empowers me to create better and more beautiful work for my clients, every tattoo session in progress and at the completion. With so many great artists out there, I am truly blessed that people are willing to wait for me for two years. I think the main reason is the variety that I could offer to the clients. The skills of the traditional hand-poked tattooing (Tebori), Oriental art, color custom, black and gray, and realistic portrait have attracted many different clients for me. I wish I could do more and faster, but there are



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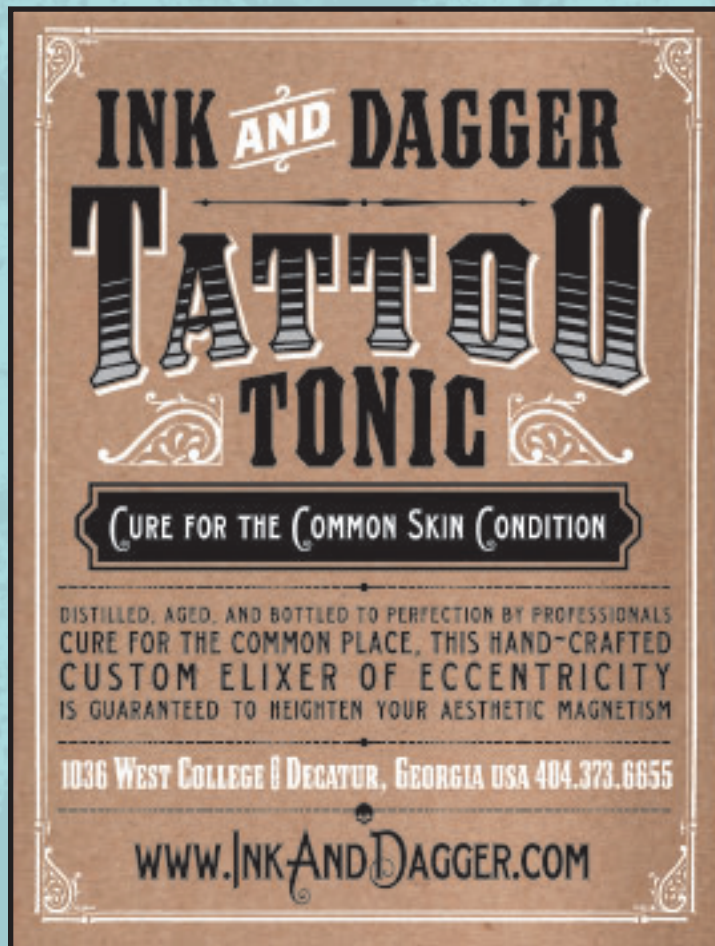


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only two hands. No word can describe how thankful I am to my clients, so the only thing I could give back to them is the best work.

What do you think is the best part of your job?

The greatest thing about being a tattoo artist is that you get to know so many people. You will hear their stories, and those stories become your art. My favorite part is when my client told me about their enjoyment of my work. I quoted from one of my clients, "Hey, Jess. This is what I do every night before I go to the bed for thirty minutes (looking at himself in the mirror). You amazed me every time I came here..." This is what keeps me going.

How does your family feel about it?

Tattooing in Taiwan was taboo back in those years. My family used to see me as a rebellious teenager. With many years of hard work and endless passion in art, I have changed their negative views of tattooing. Now they enjoy the art and are consistently checking my website for new work. My wife has been fully supportive since day one. She was the one who bought me my first electrical tattoo machine.

With sixteen years of experience, most people would consider you an industry veteran by now. What are some of the biggest changes you've seen in tattooing?

Even with sixteen years in the industry, I always call myself an apprentice for life. This is how I lead my students. Learning is endless and creating art has no boundary.

The biggest change in tattooing is "custom." With the world advances and being globalize, a client not only wants a tattoo that identifies him or her, but is also distinctive and unique. There is no more "pick a picture from the wall." As a tattoo artist today and in the future, you must be a lifelong learner and self-starter. In that way, you will be able to create an art to fulfill your artistic ability and what a client wants.

Your shop's Web site advocated going vegetarian and fighting global warming. Are you an eco-tattoo-artist?

I strongly believe in karma – which simply says, "What goes around, comes around." Our action today will have a consequence tomorrow. I took advantage of my website to post ten ways to fight global warming and ten good reasons to be vegetarians because I want to urge every visitor of the site and myself to be thankful to our mother earth and put this thought into actions. This gratitude must go beyond all humanities, otherwise, the consequence of loosing our mother earth will come faster than we could ever imagine.





It is unfortunate that advanced technologies and living conveniences cause damages to our mother earth; therefore, as an individual or an eco-tattoo artist as you may say, I do what I can everyday to cherish and conserve the scared resources. This lifestyle may not directly influence my art, but it deeply influences my mentality and My Tattoo family. I strongly believe that mentality of appreciation comes before the skills. If one person does not have respect and appreciation, he/she will not be able to produce anything that will touch your heart. If a tattoo artist does not respect and appreciate the skin and the trust a client has given to you, he/she will not create a good work. You got to have the right heart to do the right job.

Any major shows or conventions we'll see you at in 2009?

Here is my schedule for the first half of 2009: Feb. 13-15: Milan Tattoo Convention, Milan, Italy, March 20-22: International Tattoo Convention, Frankfurt, Germany, May 29-31: Hell City Tattoo Festival, Columbus, Oh., June 5-7: Ink & Iron Tattoo Festival, Long Beach, Cali.

Is there anything else the readers of PRICK should know about Jess Yen?

I always remember all the people who have helped me in the early stage of my tattooing career. Although I did the best I could at the time, I always know that those works are not meeting my expectation today. I have much gratitude toward those people who have trusted me with their skin and encouraged me to create more art. Because of them, I have grown as an artist. Because of them, I have My Tattoo family. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them from the bottom of my heart. ★

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BRITTANY HORNER

BY SEAN DETTMAN
PHOTOS BY SYLVIA HAGAR

HOT INK

Brittany Horner is no stranger to the dead. After graduating from Gupton-Jones College of Funeral Service, Brittany got a job with a large funeral home and has since had time to intimately explore what she terms a "morbid curiosity with death." It is from this curiosity that the ideas for her tattoos were derived: a disembodied zombie geisha head, her batwing chest piece, pirates, flowers, spider webs, a whole scene based on *The Phantom of the Opera*, a shark prominently displaying its dinner—a hooker's leg—and, of course, all the blood that ties the pieces together as traditional symbols of life and death (mostly the latter) in the mythology of American tattooing.

While the theme of death certainly plays prominently into her current motif, Brittany remains steadfast in her interest to expand the current aesthetic of her tattoo collection. Eventually, she says, it will include work by new artists and an expanded range of ideas. For now, though, the details are still under consideration.

You're probably the first real mortician that we've ever interviewed. What got you interested in your current line of work?

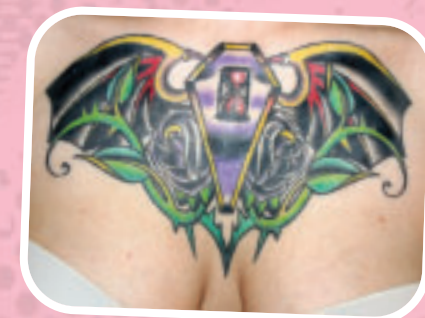
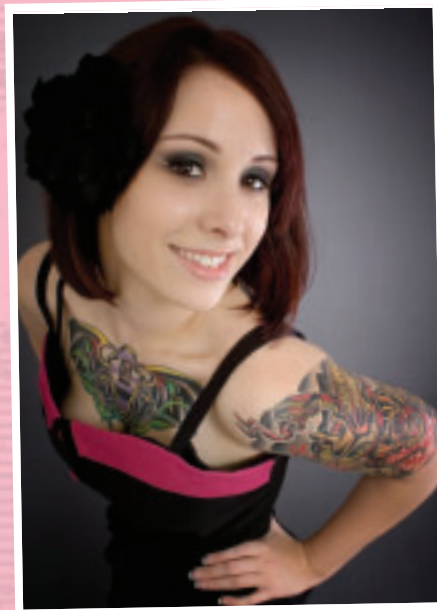
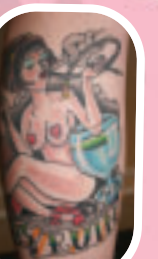
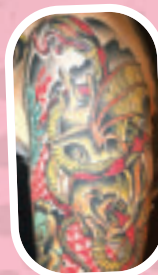
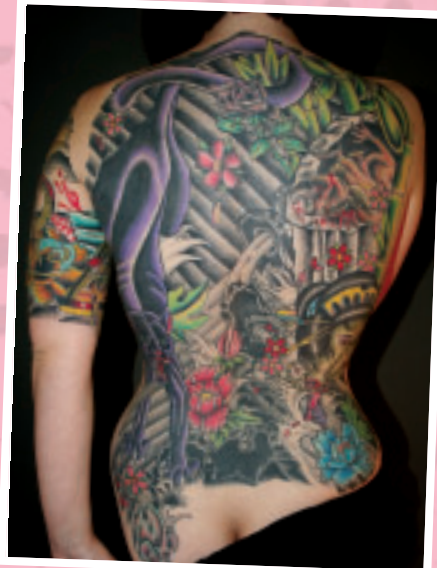
I've always had a morbid curiosity with death. I was introduced to the profession when I was in high school, and the more I learned about it and got to experience it hands on, the more I fell in love with it.

If there were a hostile zombie apocalypse, what would you do?

I'm fucked! [laughs] I'm sure there is no way I'd be able to survive anything like that in the line of work that I am in. Payback would be a bitch, but luckily I don't see that happening anytime soon!

When did you get your first tattoos?

I got my first two tattoos when I was seventeen, which was a big mistake. They're both mostly covered up now.



Do you feel that your tattoos are a good representation of who you really are?

My tattoos represent me in several different ways. People always ask me what they mean, but most of them really have no meaning. They represent something that I love (*Phantom of the Opera*, dead things, sharks, hookers, etc.) and most of them have something to do with death because—lets face it—death is my life. I have many dark images but they're all done tastefully with bright colors and fun details. Contrary to popular belief, I'm really not that weird I just like some "different" things.



VINCE VILLALVAZO ALL OF NOTHING

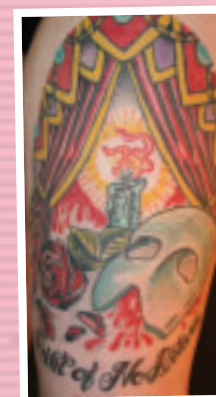
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Who are the artists responsible for your work?

Most of my tattoos are done by James Hogan out of Devotion Tattoo. He's a good guy and tries to make sure you get what you want. You can walk in there and honestly say, "Hey, I want a shark eating a hooker," and he'll have it for you. His style is a mix of the traditional but with a feeling that is dark and organic. I think he's an amazing artist. My chest piece was done by Kenny Davis.



Are you seeking out any particular artists to get work from or are you going with whoever feels right?

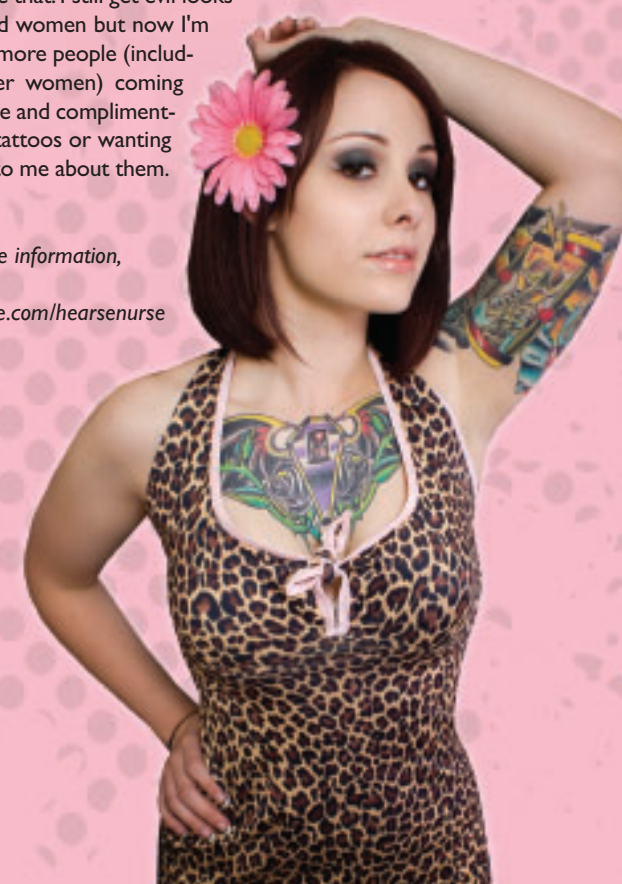
I don't have any specific artists in mind right now, but I am on the lookout for someone with good color skills who would be interested in doing a large Day of the Dead piece. I've started to look around and I've seen some very talented people nearby so I'm hoping to get lucky in that endeavor.

Do you feel that your tattoos (and your profession, for that matter) make it easier for you to challenge some of the more traditional thinking in our modern society?

I think that I've opened many people's eyes and minds when it comes to being a "tattooed girl." I love my tattoos and what they mean to me but I'm not flashy when it comes to showing them off. I understand that many people still have that old school mentality where they don't understand why a girl (or anyone for that matter) would want to put permanent pictures on their skin. As far as the profession that I'm in goes, I have to cover them and be respectful to the families I serve. Most people don't want to see a tattooed girl cart their loved one away, so I respect that decision and keep them covered up. Tattoos are more accepted now, more than they have ever been, so I've been able to truly embrace that. I still get evil looks from old women but now I'm getting more people (including older women) coming up to me and complimenting my tattoos or wanting to talk to me about them.

★

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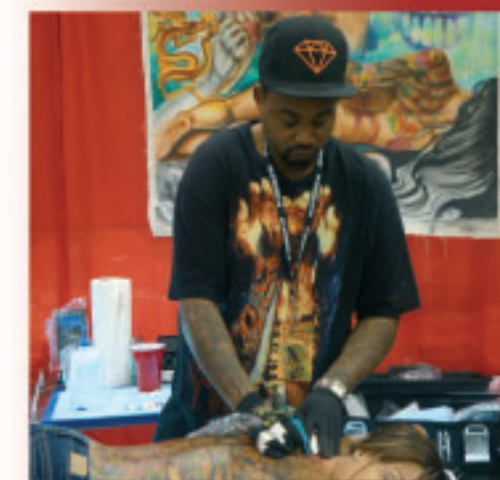
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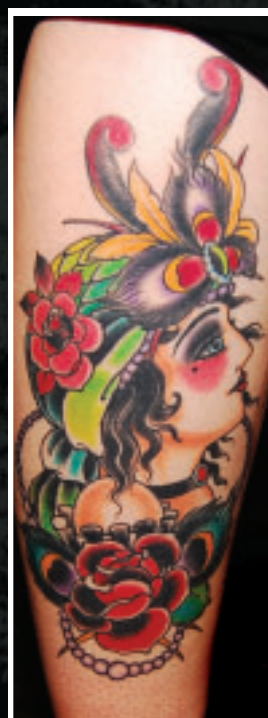
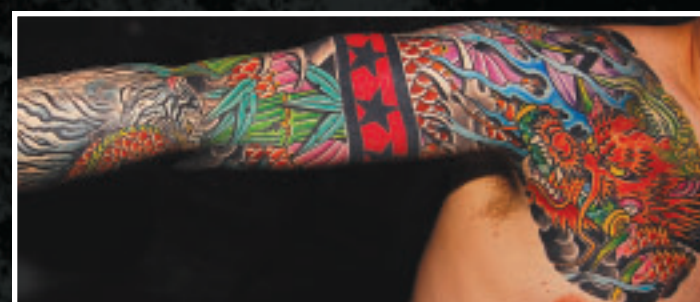


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Justin Perry's Japanese tattoos by Chris Trevino of Perfection Tattoo



Josie Outlaw's leg tattoo done by Grez in Long Island, N.Y.

Mike Ski may be one of the busiest guys in the underground punk rock community. Not only does Ski spend close to ten months a year on the road fronting Philadelphia's synthey-garage-punkers the AKAs, but he is also a very accomplished and talented tattoo artist. Spending more time sleeping on the road than in your own bed and spending more time with a microphone in your hand than a tattoo gun can be an exhausting lifestyle, but Mike Ski seems to have his head on straight: "I'm not sure I ever expected to be playing music as such an extension of being an artist, but it really is a hand in hand relationship between the visual and aural that keeps me going forward." Now that's a philosophy we at PRICK can really get behind.

"I got into playing music early on, I was a skateboarding, punk rocking, middle class misfit kid and successfully conned my mom into buying me a bass guitar when I was 15." While Ski may have gotten into the punk rock scene the way most of us did, one of the things that separates him from the rest of us tattooed and shit talking record collectors is his constant search of looking for something new and creative. "I was in search of some like-minded kids to do something that really spoke to a gap in music and culture that I felt. Along the way, we found that there was an opportunity to combine a message with our music and do it in a fun and creative way that inspired us as much as a potential audience."

Perhaps what makes Ski and the A.K.A.s such an

interesting and inspiring band is the way they approach their style and the things that influence their music. "We're an eclectic mish-mash of musical influences," Ski tells us when we asked him about his biggest musical influences. "The best way I've found to describe it is that we've been influenced by musical historical climates of unrest. The raw and free spirit of the rock and roll of the late 1960s when the world was challenged to overcome war, illuminating civil and human rights, and the destruction of uptight traditions of the '50s. Again in the late '70s, the punk movement reacted to the social conditions and vapidity in the world with a loose, unpolished and irreverent sound and aesthetic. Lastly, the '80s brought about a new outlook of fun, carefree, dance-inspired abandon."

It's obvious to most people that the punk rock and tattoo communities have always been heavily intertwined, and Ski is more aware than most. "I've always been into art and drawing since I was very young. I was drawn to tattooing as an extension of the music culture and aesthetic I had grown up with," Ski recalls. "I think I was looking to fill a void...of tattoo artists in my area. I taught myself, so it took longer to develop, but I kept at it and worked hard to learn while continuing to learn about art, design, and apply it to my tattoos. Always continuing to learn and evolve through experiences is something I hope and work for in art—tattooing and music."

Perhaps one of Ski's most endearing qualities as an artist is his respect and appreciation for artists that came

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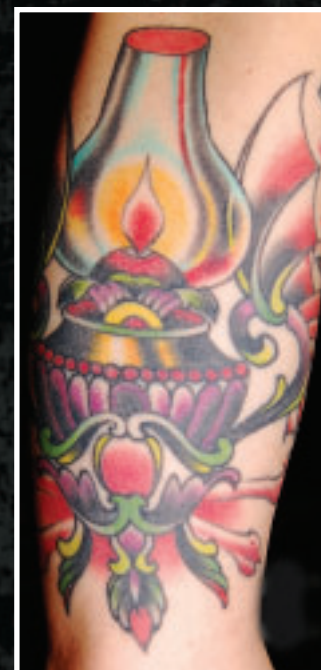
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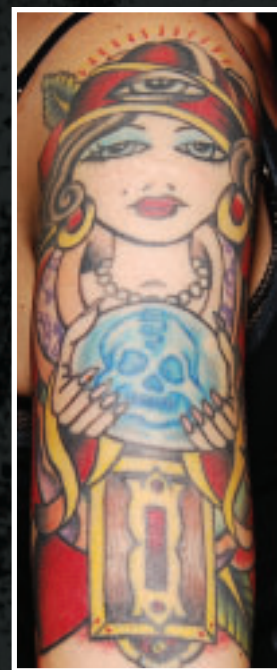
Mike Ski's backpiece by CIV



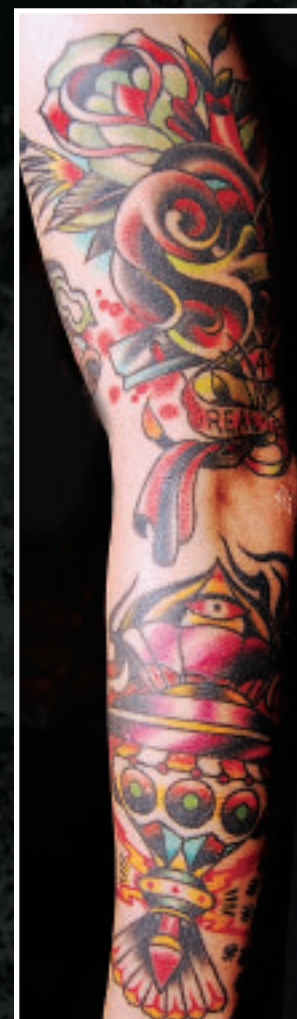
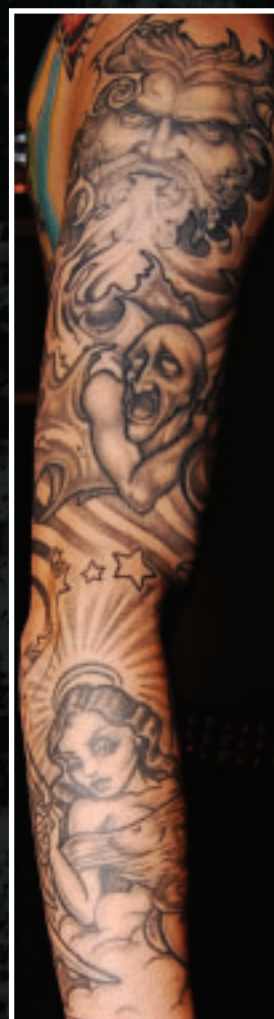
Mike Ski's tattoo by Grime



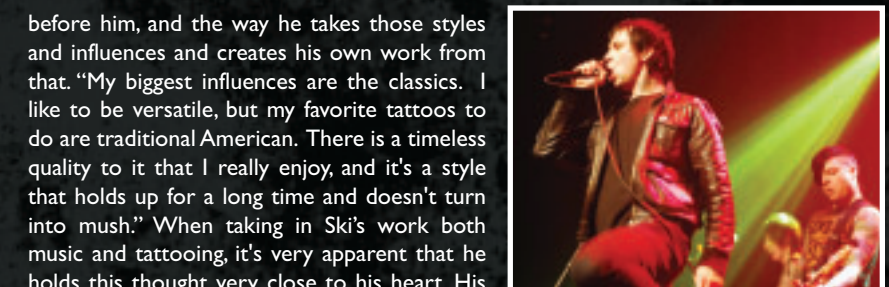
Josie Outlaw's latern tatoo
by Adam Barton



Josie Outlaw's tattoo
by Mike Ski



Mike Ski's B&G right arm (left) by Kim Saigh, left arm
Traditional: UFO, heart/rose, JFK bullet by Adam Barton in San
Jose, Cali., Weatherman's hand by George Archer, Safety pin
by Dave at Inksmith & Rogers in Jacksonville, Fla.



before him, and the way he takes those styles and influences and creates his own work from that. "My biggest influences are the classics. I like to be versatile, but my favorite tattoos to do are traditional American. There is a timeless quality to it that I really enjoy, and it's a style that holds up for a long time and doesn't turn into mush." When taking in Ski's work both music and tattooing, it's very apparent that he holds this thought very close to his heart. His tattoos are bold and in high contrast that also utilizes a lot of black shading combined with vibrant and bright colors in a thick outline.

"Through our touring, I've had the chance to tattoo other bands like Bleeding Through, Silverstein, Hawthorne Heights, Fall Out Boy, etc. If only I was a fifteen year old girl, I would be able to die right now," Ski jokes as he talks to us about the challenges of being a tattoo artist while traveling for his music. "It's definitely a challenge as we've toured for ten months this year alone, but I try to make as much time as I can for tattooing on the road. I'm pretty happy that I've had the chance to tattoo some cool people all over that I wouldn't have the chance to if I was in once spot." Having said all of that though, tattooing a bunch of punk kids on the road must certainly give way to some interesting tattoo stories, and by being on both sides of the needle, Ski has plenty. "Hawthorne Heights; I've tattooed four of those guys in the past, including the guitar player Casey, who sadly passed away on that tour," Ski recalls. "I had always joked with those guys about a tattoo idea of a bucket with two tears falling into it (like the saying 'Cry two tears in a bucket...fuck it'). After the tour, I went to Dayton and did the tattoo on two of the guys and traded tattoos with another artist, so we all have fuck it buckets in memory of Casey."

One of the taglines that always follows Mike Ski and the A.K.A.s is "ARE EVERYWHERE!" and we learned that is certainly no bullshit, they really are everywhere and always staying busy. "We're excited to have a busy schedule coming together already including a tour with Foxy Shazam and Dr. Manhattan, another tour in March with Bouncing Souls and Dillinger 4, recording our new record with Jamie Woolford in Arizona, then off to the UK and Europe where our latest album *Everybody Make Some Noise!* will soon be released, then back just in time for the entire Warped Tour this summer!" As individual goals, Ski had this to say: "I'm working on a lot of design stuff and trying to wrap up a lot of the big tattoos I've been working on for the past few months, as well as [organizing] a couple art shows, working hard on finishing up a book, and trying to get a new Web site up. Look for me in your city soon, come out and rock... and let's make some tatties!" ★

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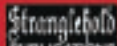
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This film focuses on many rescued pit bulls all over America,
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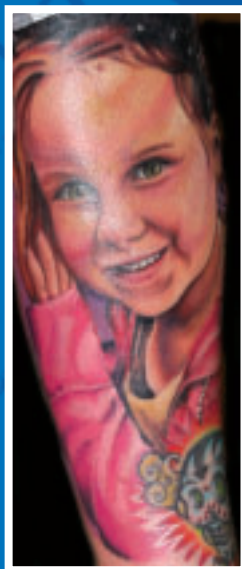
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MIAMI TATTOO EXPO

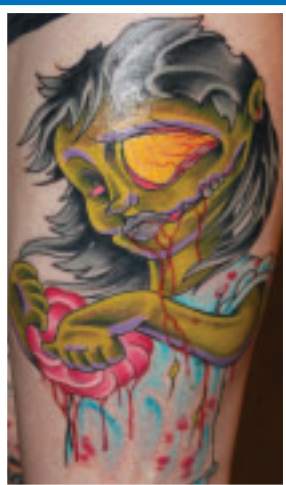
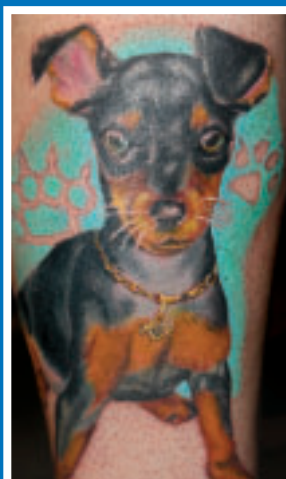
TATTOO SHOW

BY CHUCK B.



Ice Cube by **Tanner Kunz** of First Street Tattoo won **Tattoo of the Day** on Saturday, Little girl in pink by **Aaron Moore** of Westside Tattoo took **3rd for Realism**. Frank Sinatra by **Jason Ackerman**, Winner of **Tattoo of the Day** on Sunday. Mini Pincher by **Jeff Covell** (below right)

The Miami Tattoo Expo was off the chain and then some. Rated by attendance, artists, entertainment, contests, organization, venue, and the after parties or surrounding events outside the convention walls. The Miami Tattoo Expo gets a 9.5 on all categories! I heard a lot of complaints about the hotel that everyone stayed at but wtf? It was on the beach in South Beach Miami, who cares if the beds sucked, the elevator (singular) barely worked and the bathrooms needed updating. I was personally only in my room about four hours a night (early am) thanks to the busy expo, the beach, and all the after par-



Zombie girl (above) by **Leif Olson**
D. Willy of Sweet Baby Octane
(shown left) works on a backpiece



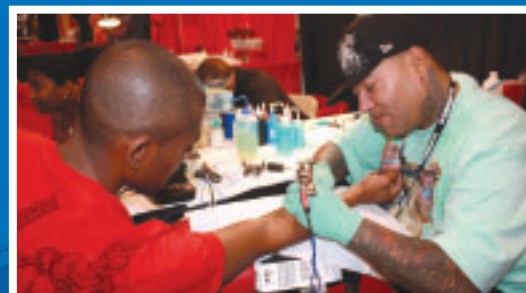
This entire thigh piece by **Ish Schuurbijs** was done in one 5.5 hour sitting! It didn't win for Tattoo of the Day because the judges didn't believe it was done all at once. I personally heard someone say later they saw him do the whole thing start to finish



The turnout for the contests and expo was exceptional!



One of the phat rides on display in Miami



Randy Harris, of **Tattoos by Randy** in ATL, rocked the show

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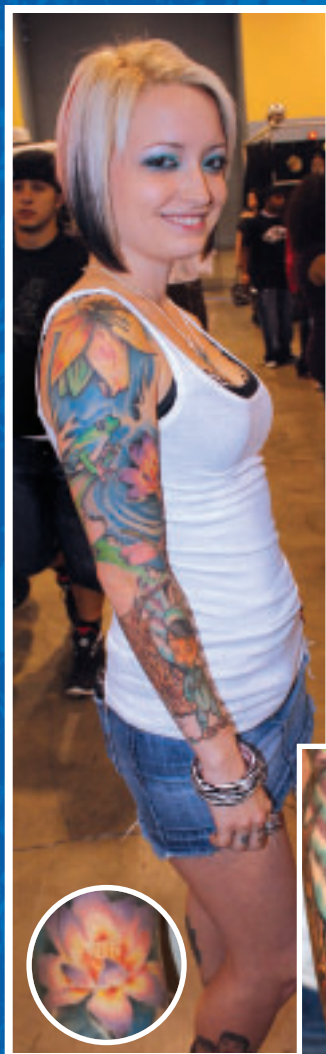
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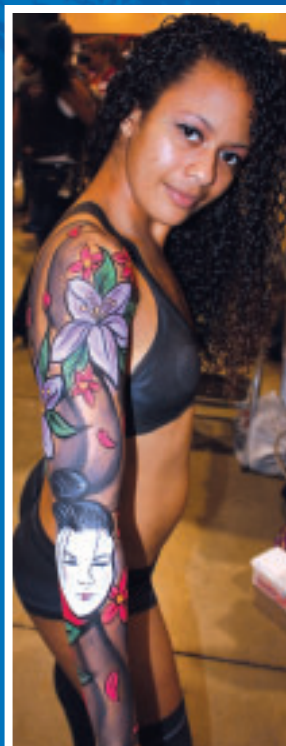
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Vany Vicious shows her tattoos by Junk Rxxxxand Remo



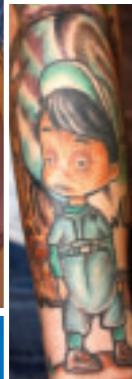
Druso Blume of Tattoo & Co. Miami shows there is no limit to self expression



A fine example of some body painting done by Way Wicked Arts



Lil' Anthony says you're never too young to be hardcore. He will knock you out!



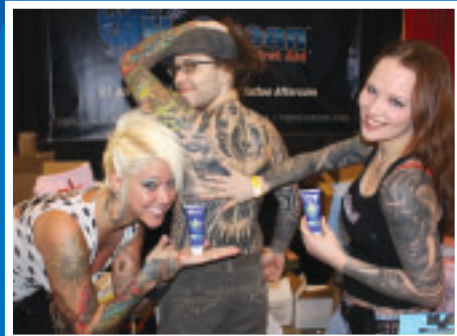
Deul of South Beach Tattoo is the man, and then some, in the Miami tattoo scene



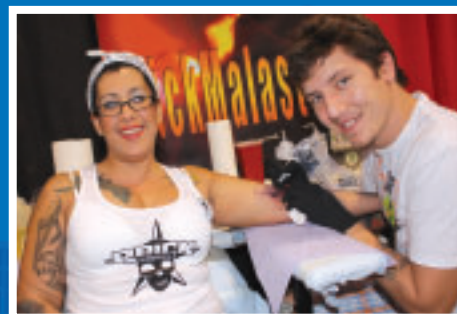
The cars and lowrider bicycles and motorcycles on display were beyond comprehension



The world famous Boog gets the world famous "Longneckerita" hook up from DJ Longneck himself



H2Ocean...so good...so natural...so nice



Frankie, Queen of the Gypsy Queens gets her crown by Nick Malasto. Nice Shirt!



MIAMI EXPO

ties that raged until sunrise.

First off the venue and location: The Miami expo was held in the Miami Beach Convention center in the art deco/party district of South Beach, just blocks from the beach and the nightlife. Though there was not an abundance of "outside the convention walls" restaurants there was plenty of food and drink vendors available inside. The convention center was not connect-

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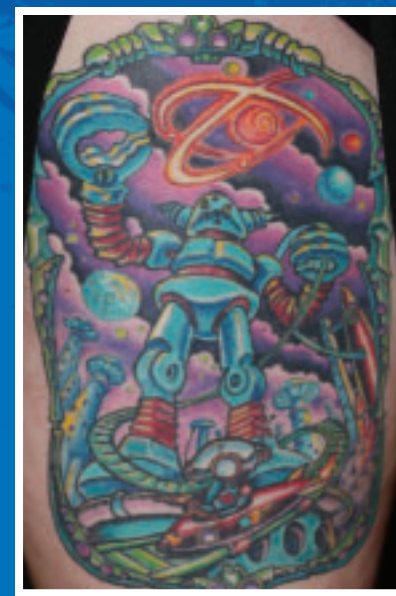
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Estaban Dalpia's tattoo by Federico Ferroni of South Beach Tattoo, took 1st for Male Backpiece



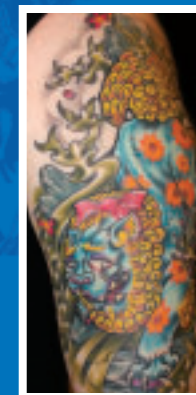
This amazing beach and bird scene on Stacy L. London by Mike Culley won 1st for Realism



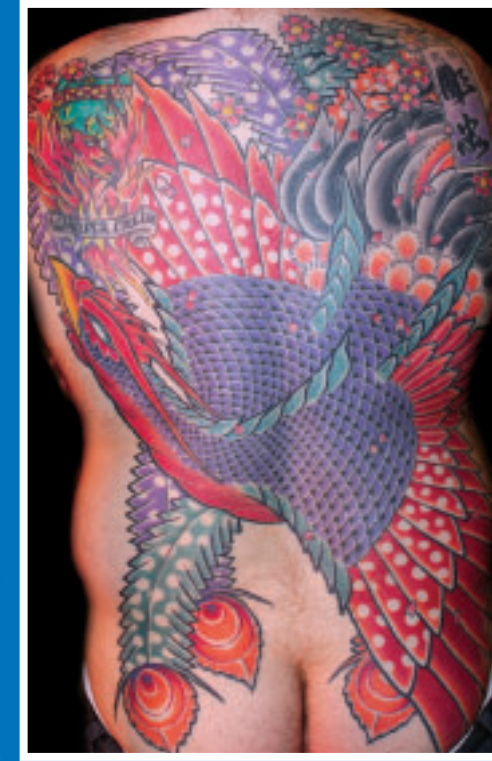
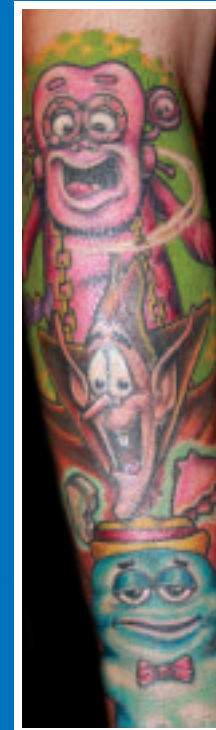
This tattoo by Pooch took the 3rd Place for Large Color



Brian Benenatti's tattoo by Federico Ferroni, South Beach Tattoo, took 2nd for Male Backpiece



Hornet by Frank LaNatra, Foo Dog by Issac Davis took 2nd for Large Color and Japanese categories. Cereal monsters by Jeff Covell took 2nd for Cartoon

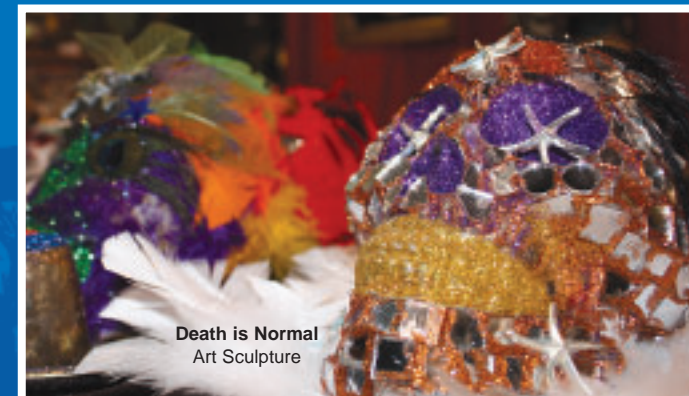


Joey Roan's Backpiece is by Horitada of Japan took the award for 3rd Place Backpiece

MIAMI TATTOO EXPO

ed to a host hotel so some of the conveniences of being able to slip away to your room and chill between busy times was not there but the flip side was that the floor stayed full of artists and collectors.

Second artists and attendance: There was a great presence of fine tattoo artists on hand including a large showing of Miami shops including Chico's Marked For life Tattoos, South Beach Tattoo and a few others. On top of that there were plenty of well known regional and U.S. touring artists such as Damien Bart, Pooch, Mark Longenecker, Gunnar, Nick Wagner, Jason Ackerman, Nick Malasto,



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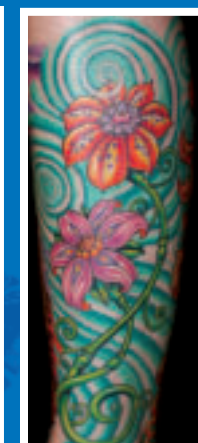
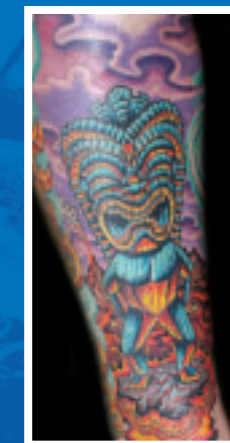


MC Pimpin' kept the crowd informed and entertained in a crazy Texan sort of way

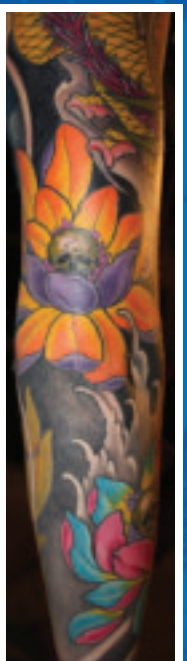
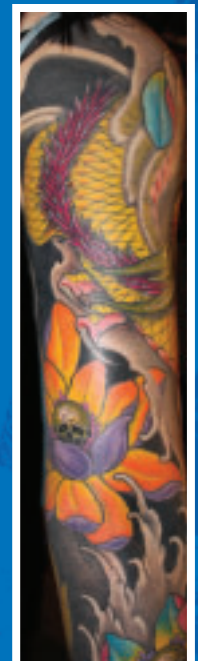


MIAMI TATTOO EXPO

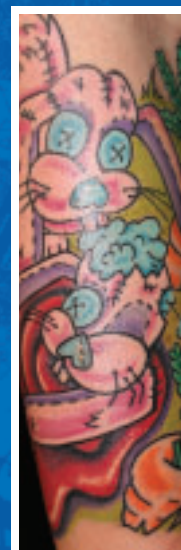
and Randy Harris. As if the expo was not already stacked, there was a good bit of international flair. The international artists came all the way from Italy and the Netherlands Antilles. Ish Schuurbijs of the latter was one of our favorites busting out amazing and



The leg sleeve (above) by Pooch of Altered State Tattoo took 1st and 2nd for the Female Leg Sleeve category. Pink bunny tattoo (below far left) by Kenny Dick of Lucky 7, Some of the lovely ladies of Shameless Burlesque (below)



Vanessa Highland won for Best Female Sleeve and Large Color by Federico of South Beach Tattoo



huge pieces in a very short amount of time.

Next entertainment: Music was a major part of the overall expo and was quite unique. At most conventions the entertainment is a mere side note and it's generally rock and/or rock-a-billy and most of the time they play to an empty room. Not so in South Beach. It was a metal and hip hop/rap party and it was a major part of the show. There was also a dozen or so phat rides displayed on the floor blasting hip hop between the bands but when the acts came on the crowd followed the sounds and filled the side stage area to capacity. The bands included Evergreen Terrace, Jim Jones, Madball, Jay Vega, Brisco, Charlie Hustle, Unda Surveillance, Thick as Blood, and JT Money. There were also titillating performances by

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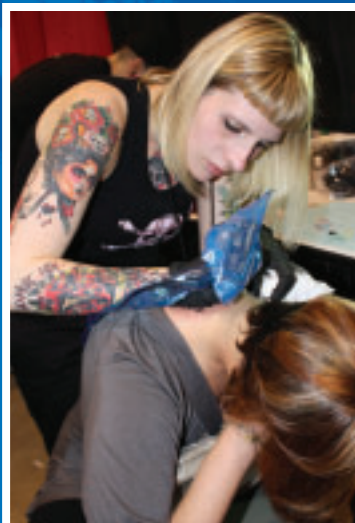
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Samez of Cherry Tattoo in Rome, Italy



John Vale of Ocho Placas tattoo drew quite a crowd in his art gallery style mega-booth

MIAMI TATTOO EXPO

The Shameless Burlesque Group. There was non-stop eye and ear candy the whole weekend.

The contests: The contests were unique as well. Instead of being judged in categories the judging was in random order. Everyone who entered anything that day got in line to be judged, first come first serve style. The judges had to shuffle a lot more paper but the entries were granted much more flexibility. The awards were given out each night by category with 1st through 3rd place winners. Chico's Marked For Life Tattoo, South Beach Tattoo, Pooch of Altered State Tattoo and Jeff Covell took home lions' shares of the awards.

Shameless Burlesque Girls handed out all the awards. All the winners received nice sized trophies.

The after parties each night of the weekend were mind melting and took



Damien Bart of Bruce Bart Tattooing filling in some blanks on an amazing backpiece

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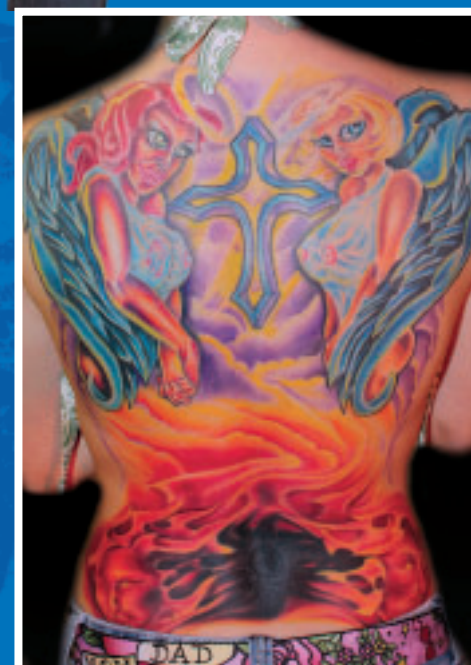
MIAMI EXPO

me a week to recover from. The Gypsy Queens, including group founder Frankie, served the expo and the after parties well by taking on the roles of hostesses and party promoters. The first night was at a club called Heathrow, it was a fun bar but there were many rooms to the club and a lot of the artists didn't actually get to hang as a group. Saturday night proved to be fun but we, along with a dozen or so artists, didn't actually get in to the after party at

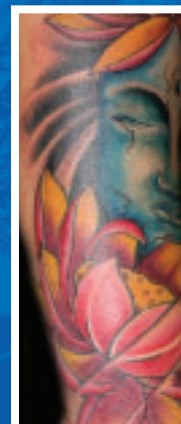
Sara Robinett won 1st Place for Overall Female. Tattoos by Greg Robinett of Warlock's Tattoo



Joe Zerna won for Best Overall Male. This is one of his latest pieces by Ese of Exceptional Ink



Amy Burris won 1st for Female Backpiece by Chad Sinkhorn of Studio Ink



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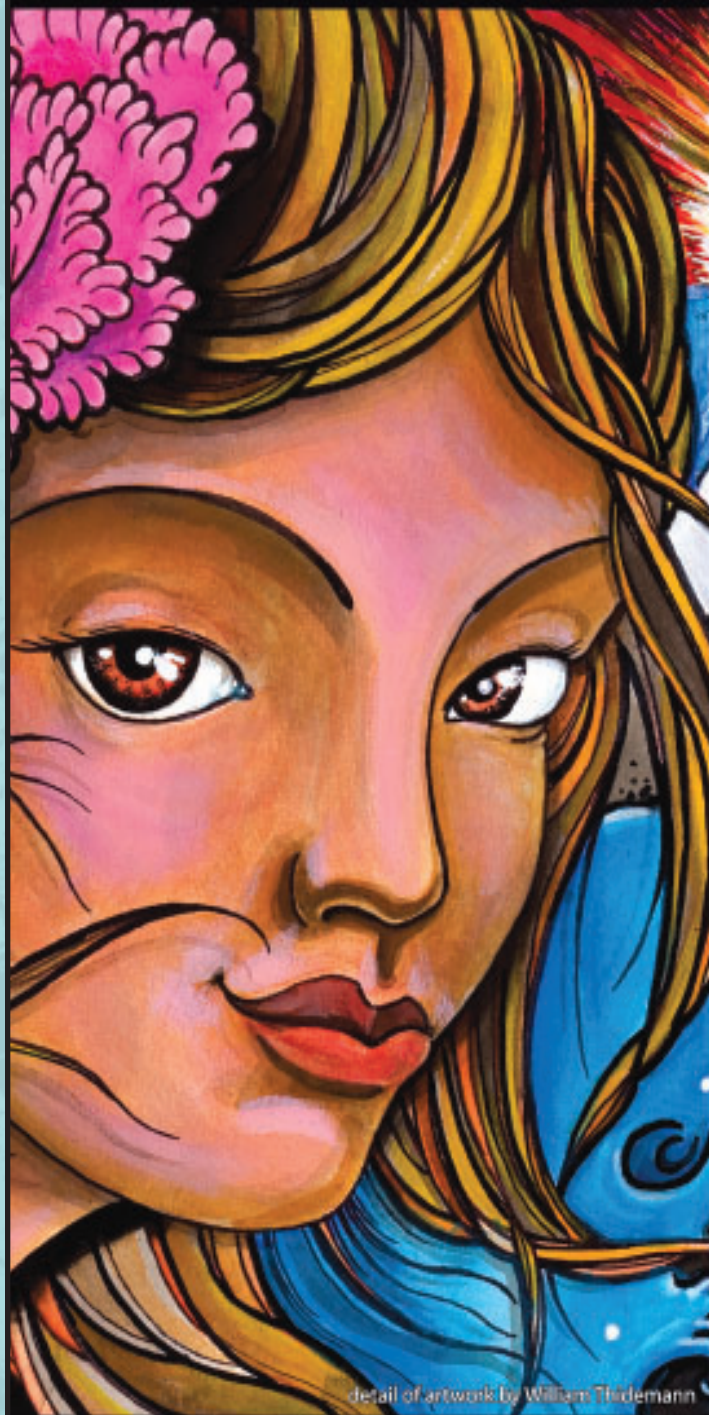
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detail of artwork by William Thiedemann

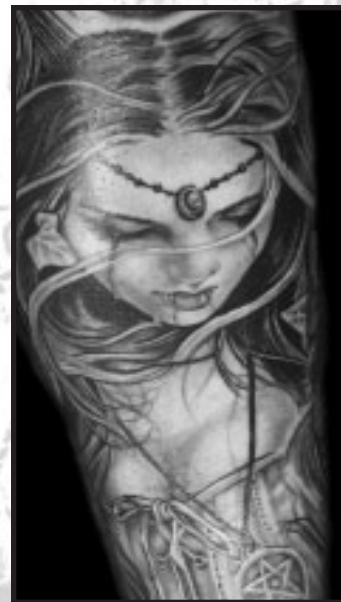
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Luis Rosal's tattoo is by Albert Rosal
took home 2nd for Realism



2nd Place Winner B&G by Chip Harris
of Inksters Tattoo



Steve Owen's tattoo by Mark
Draven placed 3rd for B&G



This handpiece by Jeff Covell took
2nd for Small B&G



This piece by Federico Ferroni won 1st Place for B&G



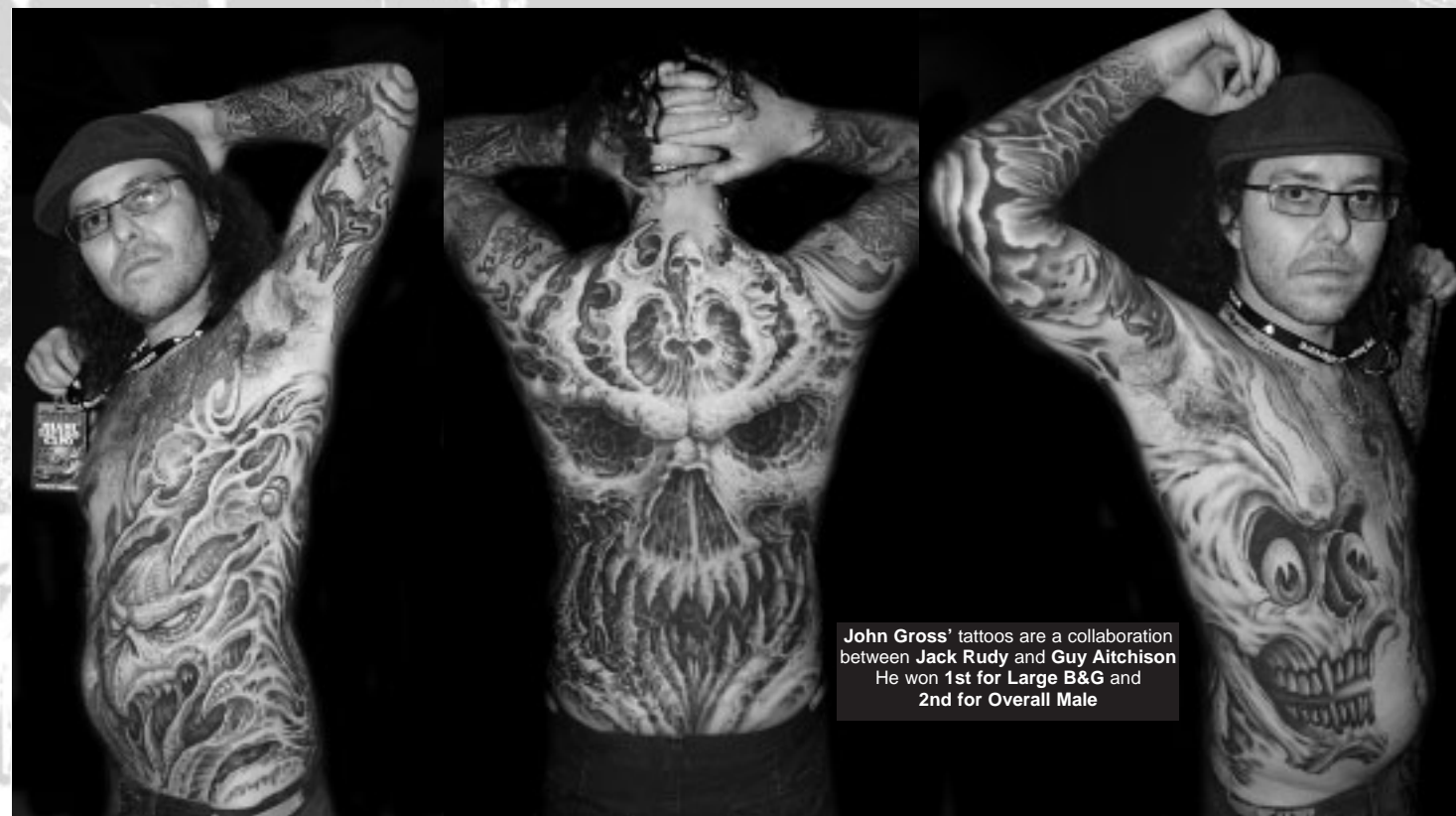
2nd Place Winner of Tattoo of the Day
on Sunday by Ish Schuurbijs



Winner Best Small B&G
By Chico of Chicos Marked for Life

MIAMI TATTOO EXPO

Cameo because our clothes were not fitted enough or we were not pretentious enough, but the bar next door was just fine. The Sunday night party proved to be the best of all nights. Starting out at a rasta bar called Jazzid where DJ Long Neck was a guest DJ and then heading to the Love Hate Lounge. Let's just say you can party at a "higher" level on Sundays in Miami. Jamaica or Amsterdam has nothing on South Beach Miami.



John Gross' tattoos are a collaboration
between Jack Rudy and Guy Aitchison
He won 1st for Large B&G and
2nd for Overall Male

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MIAMI TATTOO EXPO



Brad Cain's new tattoo by Christine (XuXu) of Altered State



Bride of Frankenstein by Marco of RR Studios, Winner of Tattoo of the Day - Female on Jaclyn Graff



Side panel by Joan Zuniga (above left) took 2nd for Large B&G, Backpiece by Kevin Powell (above right) placed 3rd for Large B&G



Tommy Groth's sleeve by Paul Booth. Booth was not at the show, but this tattoo took home a 3rd Place trophy for Male Arm Sleeve



The organization and the overall production of the expo was top notch, and I heard no complaints about the expo itself. The whole show and the entertainment ran like a well-oiled machine. Miami Tattoo Expo producer Peter Brouillette seemed to be on top of everything and had a great staff helping him throughout. All in all it was a really great show, I can't wait until next year. ★

For more information, go to www.miamitattooexpo.com.

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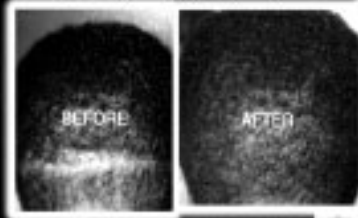
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MUSIC NOTES OF HEARING & SUPPORTING BANDS WORTHY



VIVIAN GIRLS

Vivian Girls [In The Red]

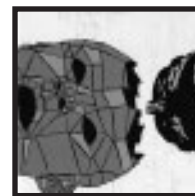
Much like outsider artist Henry Darger whose 15,000+ page tome provided the source material for their moniker, the odd-ball appeal of the Vivian Girls comes from the way they dance on the fringes of the mainstream, producing effervescent melodies in a thick coating of lo-fi production. The exemplary track here is "Wild Eyes," a dreamy piece of pop laced with the kind of coos and harmonies that evoke romance and warmth yet, thanks to a lack of in-studio refinement, sound distant and untamed. There are hints of shoegaze, indie, surf, punk, and Phil Spector-era girl groups all at work in this band's jangly and humble sound, but with this gorgeously raw blend, the final product turns into something unexpected and fresh. - *Reyan Ali*



THE INSURGENCE

Never Surrender [Basement]

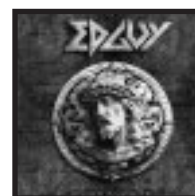
Full of thick, crunching sounds and bitter vocals, this EP from the upstart California hardcore act tends to get a little bland and repetitive after a handful of listens, but this material nonetheless holds a ton of potential. The drumming moves at wild speeds, slick riffs curve in and out of choruses, and the shifting use of gang vocals are all done well. However, the issues here lie in the execution. The lyrical content is typically fiery hardcore without any surprises, and the whole thing is built on the idea that the best way to play the genre is by moving with breakneck aggression. Adding a few odd melody changes or some silence could add some unusual punctuation to the disc to set it apart from the hardcore pack, as would allowing the production to wear a little bit more feedback and grit. - *Reyan Ali*



FINAL FIGHT

Half Head, Full Shred [Panic]

Thick, gnarly, punk-infused hardcore will probably never really go out of style. And while bands like Youth of Today and Minor Threat birthed the giant, it's bands like Final Fight that give it true staying power. Anger is a key element on this disc, but the band runs its anger through a sifter of melody and catchy hooks thus removing the monotony that typically plagues this genre. What's left behind is a purposeful arrangement of songs that rip and tear like nothing else. - *John Valliere*



EDGUY

Tinnitus Sanctus [Nuclear Blast]

Always good for a chuckle and great for just rocking out, Edguy is the band that makes fun of a genre ('80s metal) and then ends up writing better albums than most of their (too serious) peers and predecessors. *Rocket Ride*, released in 2006, was way over the top. *Tinnitus Sanctus* is not as overtly sarcastic or farcical. But it does carry on the same hard rock edge, which is a slight deviation from their dead-on power metal past. The bombastic, glam-glazed songs are dripping with testosterone and excess making this the perfect party disc. - *John Valliere*



VIRGINS

Miscarriage [Kiss of Death]

Made up of ex-members of the now defunct New Mexican Disaster Squad and some of the most famous guys to never leave the Orlando area, Virgins sounds like everything you grew up listening to just to piss your parents off – aka New Mexican Disaster Squad. For those of you who don't know NMDS, it sounds like a really melodic Black Flag: think of "TV Party" run through the fun machine a dozen times then coated with warm hugs and handshakes. The rough vocals will irritate your roommates and the hard and fast instrumentation will drive your neighbors crazy. Then again, if these people don't like your music it might be time to move. - *John Valliere*



EAGLES OF DEATH METAL

Heart On [Downtown Recordings]

I don't know if I can sum up the third album from Eagles of Death Metal any better than their front man Jesse Hughes already has: "EODM's latest fabulous weapon, a top-secret music missile, a sonic warhead sexually tipped for her pleasure, shot from the deck of USS EODM Mantastic Fantastic." Verbose, poetic, and true. Whether you love or loathe mock rock, you must give credit to the dynamic duo Hughes and Queens of the Stone Age member Josh Homme manifest to bring a little bit of show and a whole lot of awesome into the world. Less death metal than their name suggests, *Heart On* is quirky, glamorous, air guitaring goodness packaged exclusively for those of us who can appreciate a good joke, a fine performance, and a rock 'n' roll lifestyle. - *Lyndsey Sargent*



OUTCLASSSED

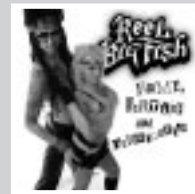
This Might Be Coincidence... [Forcefield]

Any album whose first track is titled "Kick God in the Face, Hail Satan!" certainly has some tall shoes of awesome to fill, and luckily on *This Might Be Coincidence...*, Pittsburgh, PA's Outclassed live up to the hype set forth by their albums opening track. From the second this EP opens up with screeching and ear piercing feedback, Outclassed blaze through five unapologetically abrasive and intrusive post-hardcore/screamo songs that test the sonic limits of your ears and speakers. Chock full of dirt, grit, and grime, *This Might Be Coincidence...* is a shining example of what post-hardcore and modern screamo should sound like. No pretty haircuts, no over-produced studio records, just honest, brash, raw, gutted, and genuine music that demands your attention. - *Zac Hobbs*

REEL BIG FISH

Fame, Fortune, Fornication [Rock Ridge Music]

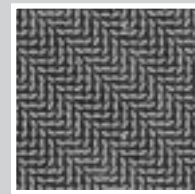
Ever wonder what the lyrics of that delightfully towheaded Bret Michaels would sound like backed up against the brass, instrumental, and unabashed sounds of ska? Shit, who wouldn't, right? Though it's never crossed this writer's mind, Reel Big Fish is all over it with *Fame, Fortune, Fornication*, an album of skanked out covers from the likes of Poison, Tom Petty, and John Mellencamp. Does this actually work? Well, it allowed RBF to put out an entire new album with minimal effort, so win on their part. But as far as actually paying for and listening to all ten pseudo-ironic tracks? Epic fail, you bowler hat wearing, checkered pattern using bastards. - *Lyndsey Sargent*



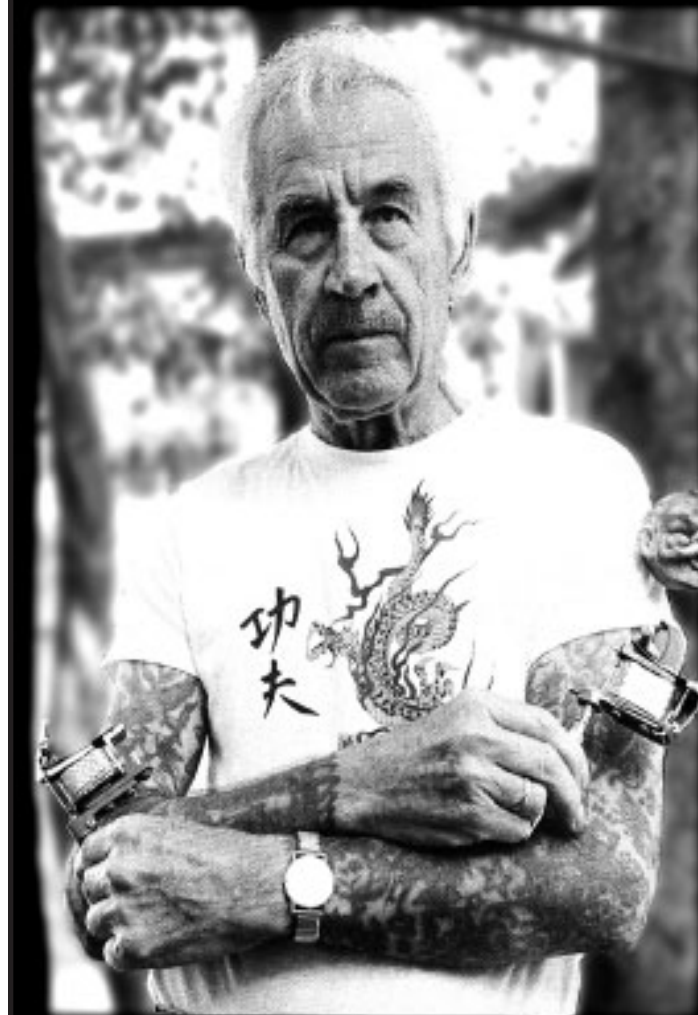
ANIMAL COLLECTIVE

Merriweather Post Pavilion [Domino]

AC's newest, *Merriweather Post Pavilion*, will end up as one of two things in 2009: best of or most hyped. MPP eschews most of the traditional Animal Collective instrumentation for the infinitesimal range of sound-producing electronics, a choice that some will find hard to cope with. But a band that once found itself afloat in the trip-folk sludge should be proud of its newly minted piece of art; a sprout of what is expected to become the digital age for members Avey Tare, Geologist and Panda Bear. For experienced listeners, it may be hard not to get caught up in the minutiae of this record, but you are encouraged to try. Recommended favorites as follows: "In the Flowers," "Brothersport," and "Lion in a Coma." - *Sean Dettman*



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SCROLLS

Canvas Los Angeles - Canvasla.com

Another amazing show at Canvas L.A., "Scrolls" opened on January 17th. An exhibit curated by PRICK contributing writer William Thidemann, these interesting pieces of art are based on an age old concept, the scroll. "Scrolls" will be stationed at Canvas L.A. until

March 1st, and then will become a traveling show that will visit Denver in April and after that will move on to Rodney Raine's new studio. With fifty-five amazing artists, including Dave Fox, Hiro, Jenny Lee, Shawn Barber, Jay Langer, Aaron Della Vedova, Todd Noble Holloway, and Steve Boltz to name a few, this is one parchment that you don't want to pass up. [Lisa Sharer]

February & March

SOUNDWAVE FESTIVAL

Australia - Soundwavefestival.com

Wallabies. Boomerangs. Crocodile Dundee. Soundwave Festival. Australia certainly has a traceable pattern of producing awesome. Nine Inch Nails and a line-up of badass punk and metal acts will be swinging around the Australian nation for the 2009 Soundwave Festival. Headliners NIN, Alice In Chains, and System of a Down join a metric shit-ton of talent like Jack's Mannequin and The Red Jumpsuit Apparatus for a five city tour practically guaranteed to rock your socks off. The shows are all ages and will have multiple stages and signing booths, as well as "the odd bit of crappy installation art for you to laugh at." G'day, mate! [Lyndsey Sargent]



February 16-17

PROGROCK 2009

Katowice, Poland
Myspace.com/progrockfestival

Metal Mind Productions is back to host a second year of Poland's gnarliest showcase of progressive rock artists. The two day festival,

held at the Wyspianski theatre in Katowice (the current hubbub of progrock in Eastern Europe), will feature cult movement icons like SBB, Shadowland, and Overhead. Tickets range from 50 to 90 zlotych (that's \$16 to \$28 US dollars, ya'll), so if you've been searching for a good excuse to hit it up and rock it out in Poland, now's your chance. [Lyndsey Sargent]

February 13 - March 6

DREAMGIRLS & UKES

Thinkspace Gallery - Thinkspacegallery.com

Combining the mythological figure of the half-nude woman (the hula girl, if you will) with that of the ubiquitous ukulele, Amy Crehore's newest show, *Dreamgirls and Ukes*, exhorts the viewer to see past the strange or surreal qualities of the paintings and look deeper, asking: what would Sailor Jerry do? Presented at L.A.'s Thinkspace gallery, the opening reception is Friday, February 13th from 7-11 p.m. and features Amy's band, The Hokum Scorchers, playing music that sounds like the blues, ragtime and a jug band. The show runs through March 6. [Sean Dettman]



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Artwork by James Hottelinger from "Mermaid Song"

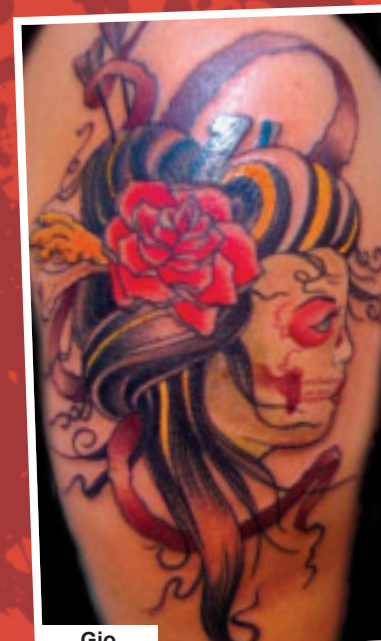
HIGH STREET TATTOO

SHOP OF THE MONTH

BY LISA SHARER PHOTOS COURTESY OF HIGH STREET

The original High Street Tattoo is at 872 North High Street, in Columbus' short north arts district. Notably, it is located very close to Stoney St. Clairs' studio. Columbus' first tattooer, and featured in the documentary *Stoney Knows How*. It has been open for Ohio's tattooing pleasure for three years. The second studio is at 1270 South High St, also in Columbus, and it has been opened just over a year. Both studios are held in high regards not only by its inhabitants, but also by its clients. Even walk-ins take the time to blog about the excellent and inviting experience they had there.

Both studios have a relaxing, spa like atmosphere, soothing and mellow. "I opened them with the belief that it was time to give clients a more professional atmosphere, not just a better tattoo. I was tired of blaring music, unfriendly artists, and bad service. We stick to appointment times, provide a clean, friendly atmosphere and give a client what they want, not just what the artist feels like doing. Too many people forget that we wouldn't be here without clients, so we treat them accordingly," says shop owner Gio. With a respectable mission and a large staff of talented artists, these studios were easily picked as *PRICK's* Shop of the Month.



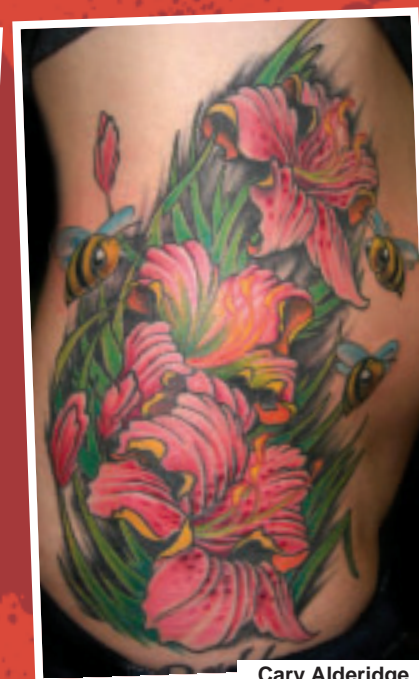
Gio



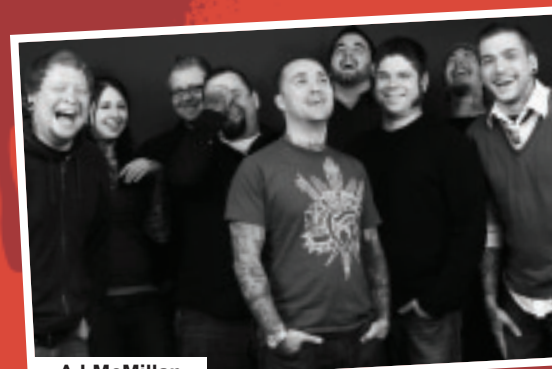
Steve Murphy



AJ McMillan



Cary Alderidge



AJ McMillan



Cary Alderidge

Give us a brief bio on each artist.

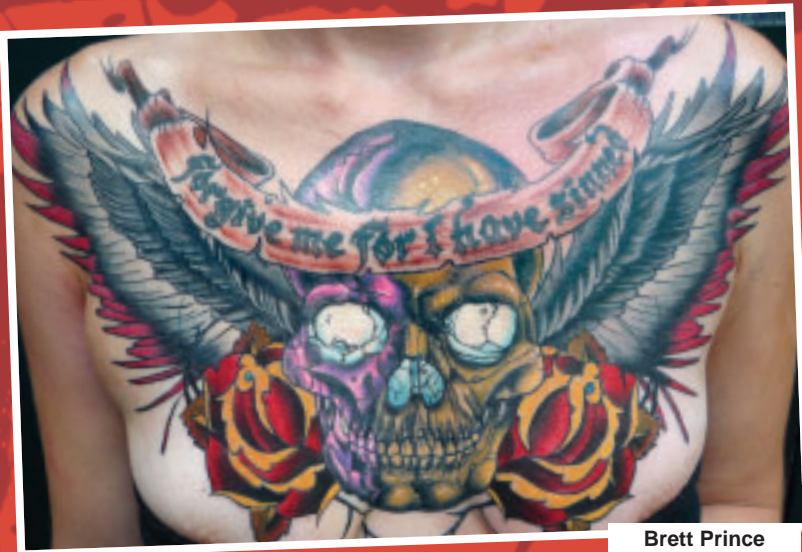
North Studio first (it is the original). I should start by saying I'm so very lucky to have a group of guys that all do something different from each of their peers, that really gives my clients an opportunity to get a bit of everything.

Scott Santee- has been tattooing a bit over six years, and has a style that I feel really exemplifies the Midwest—fundamentally good tattooing, creative use of images, strong technically, and really unique in his ability.

Cary Alderidge- has tattooed for about six years also and has a very solid illustration-influenced style. He's big on the old school and hotrod styles, but he can do anything.

Brett Prince- uses his skills to produce some of the most unique work in the studio. He is strongly influenced by renaissance art, but uses his knowledge to create very figurative, bold work, with a lot of color and depth. He has tattooed about four years.

Steve Murphy- has the most experience in the industry, at eighteen years in. His extensive travels have brought him to a very traditional Japanese style which he pushes to its limits every time he sits down. I'm fortunate for his experience as a past shop owner when I need a sounding board!



Brett Prince



Steve Murphy

South Studio

Dustin Hysell-has tattooed for eight years, and I have had the pleasure to watch him through all his development. His work is unusually smooth and deep, especially black and gray, and he has recently found a love for portrait work and his style is translating well with them.

AJ McMillan-his work represents the range of versatility. He will do anything from Japanese traditional to eye-bleeding color, and won't bat an eye. I believe he has tattooed about six years.

Biggs-I'm not even sure if I know his real name! He's pretty big though. He has tattooed for four years now and is another well versed worker. He seems to prefer that old/new school combo, but has a creative hand, so it's always unique, no matter what.

Jay Blevins-I have known Jay for about eight years now, and for the life of me I can't go a week without being amazed with the progress of his work. He is another guy that will murder any idea that comes his way! I've seen him do a portrait of Jack Kevorkian and a Japanese crane in the same day, both sick. Well, that's all of them...I also have two amazing and dedicated managers (don't call them counter help, they do everything!) Mary at the north studio, and Cary Bowen at south. I also tattoo full time. As far as my work, I like to do almost anything, but you won't catch me disrespecting the fundamentals or history of this industry. I believe a tattoo should not only be artistic and creative, but be able to stand the test of time. Too many people in this business have forgotten the fundamentals of tattooing in favor



Dustin Hysell

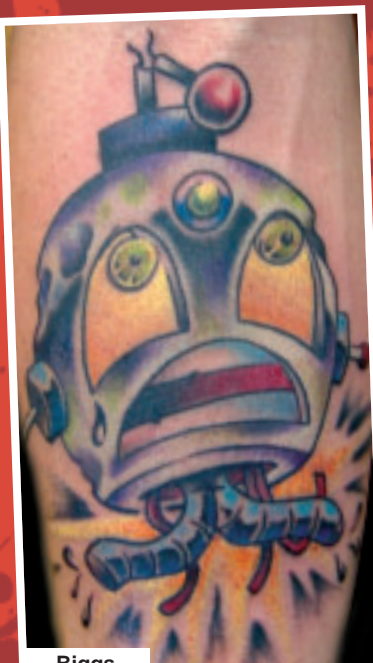
of showing what they can do artistically, and I personally think this will lead, in the future, to a return to sensible tattooing and a lot of tattoos aging poorly. I have tattooed for nine years.

What inspired you to open your own shop?

I opened the studios because I felt there was a need in Columbus, Oh. for a different type of studio. I was sick of going to loud, dirty shops with loud, dirty tattooists. I'm proud to tattoo, and was surprised to see that other people didn't seem to show that anywhere but in their work. It seemed like a natural progression after working for Durb for four years that when he sold his shop that there would be an opportunity in Columbus to do something new and different.

Has it been difficult to start/operate?

I have been very fortunate in opening these studios that all of these great artists came to me for work. When I first opened and it was just me, I had no idea that it would grow into all of this, but I wouldn't have it any other way. I had some legal troubles when I first opened with another studio owner, but we were friends before those issues, and it's all water under the bridge now. Other than that, I am lucky to have the two best managers in the business. They take care of almost everything, from maintenance, to marketing,



Biggs



Jay Blevins

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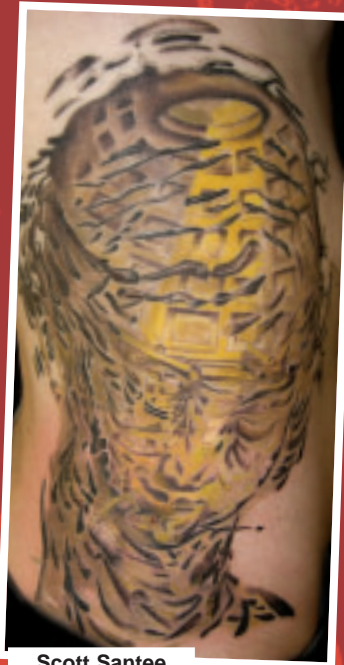
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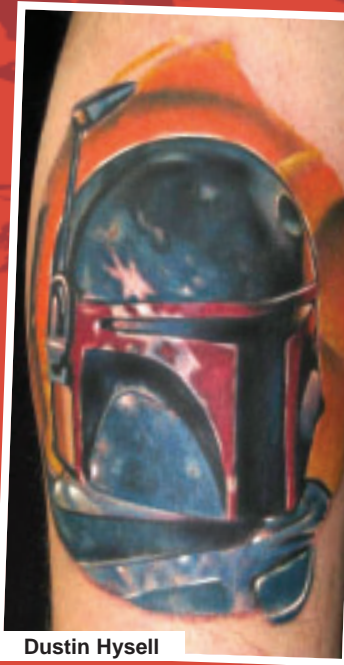
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Scott Santee



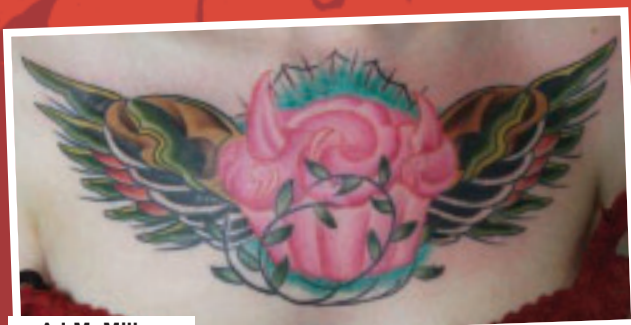
Jay Blevins



Dustin Hysell



Gio



AJ McMillan



Brett Prince

seriously, I don't know how I'd do it without them! I have found being the boss is very fulfilling; it's nice to see these people succeed, and in turn, they help me be a success, I love every one of them. They all get along like family, and cause very few issues, it's hard to believe! A special middle finger here to tattoo TV shows for acting like all tattoo artists are dramatic and hard to deal with!

Does your team work together well? Why do you think that is?

I believe my crew works so well simply by karma! It may sound silly, but I take a personal interest in their success, and I am rewarded with people that want to succeed as a team! The lines of communication in a shop must always be open. Artists must feel free to critique not only their peers, but the studio itself, and those in charge. (Like the government was supposed to be! I had to put that in there! Don't tread on us!)

Any future plans?

As far as the future, I would like to continue to grow my business with the amazing people I have been lucky enough to have around me, have more great clients, and possibly a third shop! I am also looking forward to traveling a bunch more! It's a great way to get input from other artists and further yourself artistically. I would like to thank all of my peers and mentors in Ohio—Durb Morrison, Brian Brenner, Billy Hill, and Dana Brunsons whole family. Also those who have been kind enough to extend their abilities to me for the purpose of bettering myself—John Montgomery, Joshua Carlton, Brandon Bond, Dave Tedder, and Jeff Stumpp, to name just a few. I'm sure I didn't mention a bunch of people, but I love all of them! ★

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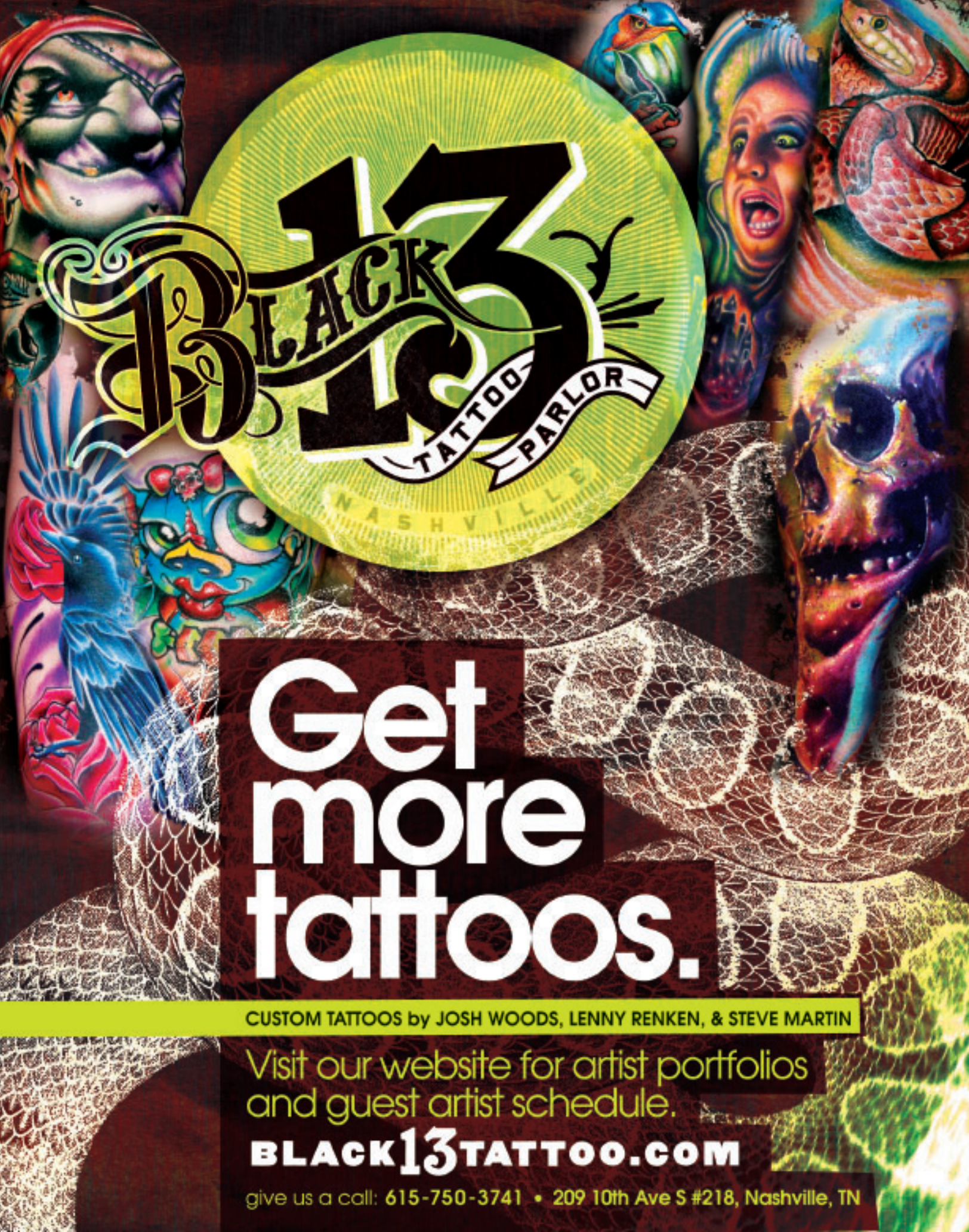


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